



# First 5 California Strategic Planning Retreat

January 23, 2019  
*Meeting Summary*

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On January 23, 2018, First 5 California (F5CA) Commissioners met for a strategic planning retreat. This document presents a summary of the Commission meeting.

## Welcome

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Commission Chair George Halvorson opened the meeting with the following remarks:

- We are in a golden age for children in California.
- Through strategic planning, we seek to optimize the use of resources, and optimize our ability to achieve our goals.
- Strategic plans provide clarity. This clarity allows F5CA staff, policy makers, and the California public to see what F5CA is doing and why.
- F5CA has been recognized as one of the only state agencies with quantifiable goals.
- This strategic planning process builds off the previous plan, and the Commission update to that plan.
- An important aspect of this plan will be a greater focus on equity. F5CA is committed to ensuring that every child has an equitable start.

## Introducing the Strategic Planning Agenda Item

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F5CA's Frank Furtek introduced the strategic planning agenda item by reviewing the process to date, highlighting what is similar and different from 2014 strategic plan, and providing an overview of how stakeholder input and Commissioner feedback contributed to evolution of the plan. Maggie Steakley from GPG presented a brief overview of the stakeholder engagement process and stakeholder input. Molly Munger and Muntu Davis, F5CA Commissioners, shared highlights from the advisory group structure and process. Finally, Moira Kenny of the First 5 Association commented, on behalf of the Association Executive Committee, on their appreciation for being included in the planning process, their support and enthusiasm for such robust inclusion of the First 5 Network Strategy in the F5CA strategic plan, and their offer to support this planning process in whatever ways they can. Moira also shared the Association's commitment to gathering input from local parents and families as the plan is further developed.

The strategic plan agenda item is available [here](#). A summary of stakeholder input is available [here](#). Additionally, the following documents were presented to the Commission:

- [Strategic Plan Framework](#)
- [Draft strategic plan](#)

## Overview, Objectives, and Expectations

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Janelle Kubinec of WestEd facilitated the rest of the strategic planning session, beginning with a review of session objectives, which included:

- Provide Commissioners with overview of activities and outcomes from strategic planning work since April 2018.
- Engage Commissioners to provide constructive feedback regarding the draft strategic plan that staff can use to finalize plan for April 2019 approval.
- Provide Commissioners and staff an opportunity to make connections and build relationships through their work on the strategic plan.

In setting the stage for the day, Camille Maben highlighted the intention to create a two-part plan, with Commissioners reviewing the public facing plan today. The internally-facing plan document will be developed in the coming months and iterated upon in the next year. George Halvorson noted the importance of both moving forward with the strategic planning process, but also taking a moment at the end of the year to look back, review, make any adjustments that maybe needed based on transitions/changes, etc.

## Draft Plan Feedback by Priority Area

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For the bulk of the meeting, Commissioners reviewed each priority area and indicated exciting ideas, questions, and/or concerns on the draft document. Commissioners then offered feedback and had a discussion around each area.

### *GOAL 1: Children thrive by achieving optimal health prenatal through age 5.*

#### **Exciting Ideas:**

- Health is a foundational value, makes life easier, limits obstacles
- Appreciate the inclusion of “ready to enter and succeed in school.” In this goal because it demonstrates that health in and of itself is in service of a larger goal
- Research and evaluation under policy and systems
- Early identification, developmental screens
- The focus on partnerships: We need to partner, not lead, with community partners in this area
- Universal developmental screens
- The First 5 Association and County Commission partners are looking forward to the details in the implementation plan around this goal area. The Association and County Commissions will be looking to F5CA for support around systems building and advocacy support around child health.

#### **Questions:**

- Where is our most appropriate leveraging point? What is our capacity?

- How should we be thinking about state vs. local partnerships around child health?

**Concerns and/or Additions:**

- Include more on informing families about what to look out for around child development
- Frame this section around investing in children to create healthy people over their life span. Currently feels like the idea that investing early is foundational and critical for future / lifetime health is missing. This may be captured in other sections, but would bear repeating
- Essential to reinforce the idea of linguistically and culturally appropriate services/communications/etc.
- Include more on data collection and communications about the data
- When discussing health care coverage, focus on sufficient coverage, not just coverage itself
- Additions
  - Behavioral health
  - “Focus on prevention”
  - A focus on mothers/maternal health

*GOAL 2: Children have equitable access to high-quality, nurturing environments that ensure learning readiness for children from birth through age 5.*

**Exciting Ideas:**

- The focus on communications (under policy and systems) plays to F5CA’s strengths
- Support a process to design and measure learning-readiness. (pg 11)
- Connections to transitional kindergarten and kindergarten
- Workforce development in all early learning settings

**Questions:**

- Where does the F5CA role of convener live in this strategic plan? [Maybe this is a thread across all three priorities, embedded in the partnerships strategy]

**Concerns and/or Additions:**

- Concerned about “equitable access” in the goal. The goal should be bigger than access.
  - Suggest changing the goal to read **“Children have high-quality, nurturing environments and experiences that ensure learning readiness for children from birth through age 5.”**
  - Recommend using targeted strategies to reach universal goals.
- Make the kindergarten/learning readiness section more prominent (not a sub bullet)

- Include informing families about healthy child development (see thread from child health)
- The community partners section has a bullet about local collaboration, but something should also be added about collaboration at the state level
- Make stronger connections between developmental screens and learning readiness assessments as two touchpoints of a continuum of assessment

*GOAL 3: Families have the knowledge, skills, and resources to support their children's optimal development.*

**Exciting Ideas:**

- Great enhancement
- We make it clear that parents are critical, need support, etc.
- Respect the role of parenting
- Paid family leave as part of the learning readiness agenda

Commissioners did not have questions, revisions, or additions to this goal area.

## Using this Plan as a Map for Action

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Towards the end of the meeting, Commissioners discussed using the strategic plan to guide F5CA moving forward.

To begin, the First 5 Association was invited to share some reactions:

- Appreciations and strengths:
  - The Association, its Executive Committee, and County Commissions more broadly appreciate the opportunity between now and April to work with F5CA as the plan is revised, refined, and finalized.
  - Acknowledging the role of the network is fantastic and really appreciated
  - The focus on policy, advocacy, and communications are a strength of F5CA and this plan
- Prioritizing and moving forward
  - It will be important for F5CA to prioritize its efforts, especially as its areas of work expand
  - The following areas are priorities for First 5 County Commissions:
    - Early intervention, developmental screens, Help Me Grow
      - Data
      - Outreach
      - State-level coordination
    - ACEs screening and associated trauma-informed interventions
    - Learning readiness assessments
    - Strong Start Index (launches Feb 4<sup>th</sup>)
    - IMPACT/ QCC

- Family strengthening (launching a refinement process around family strengthening policy sequencing)
- The Association and County Commissions hope to be invited to join F5CA in whatever way is appropriate and are eager to be involved

Commissioners then discussed how the strategic plan should be translated into more detailed implementation guidance and how the changing policy and leadership landscape may influence that process. The following ideas were shared:

- There is a tension between specificity and the looseness/flexibility that is needed in order to be opportunistic
  - This is a new landscape for the field
  - How do we balance “good and accountable implementation” without having a strict implementation plan while some of our partners are still in transition?
  - Suggestion to avoid too much specificity at this time (Molly Munger)
    - Have staff give a series of examples of the kind of work that is included in each area (like the forecast)
    - Create internal manager workplans, continue in F5CA’s work over the next year, then assess at that time when there may be more answers to some of the policy/landscape questions that currently exist
    - Leave room for fluidity. Clarity will emerge gradually. This would be a respectful and iterative way of moving forward.
  - Suggestion to specify priorities and details where possible (Kris Perry)
    - There is still the challenge of figuring out how all F5CA’s plan fits with the new administration, legislature priorities, etc.
    - Suggest being as specific as possible so when winning issues emerge, the community of First 5s can be ready to launch
    - It would also be helpful to prioritize
    - Recommend avoiding repetition of the same examples across the forecast sections

In general, Commissioners agreed on the need for some flexibility in first year implementation plans, and an interest in listing areas that F5CA “intends to explore” in regard to new opportunities. Commissions also noted that an operational management plan was important but does not need to come to the Commission.

## Next Steps

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Before the meeting closed, Commissioners were invited to envision what success looks like after implementing the emerging strategic plan. Commissioners shared the following “2024 Headlines:”

- All over California, children are learning ready

- California comes together for kids
- Families are supported to be their children's first teachers
- California has defined and is measuring learning readiness
- Learning Readiness:
  - California decreases and prevents the achievement and opportunity gaps
  - California has an early benchmark to understand and assess the achievement gap. California uses this to intervene early
  - California has no learning gap
- Kids are smart and happy

At the end of the meeting, the following next steps were identified:

- GPG will summarize Commission meeting notes
- F5CA will revise the strategic plan based on Commissioner Input
- Advisory Committee will review and inform revisions
- Commission will meet in April to approve the strategic plan
- F5CA will continue to work on the implementation document

Commissioners and F5CA staff expressed appreciation for all the work completed to date to develop the plan, including the input from stakeholders, participation from the First 5 Association Executive Committee, and dedication of F5CA staff and Commissioners.